8

Some Short

CONSIDERATIONS

Concerning the

State of the Nation.

A Day being [illegible] by the House of Commons for considering [illegible] the Nation, before the day which they have [illegible] for considering the King's Speech, we are encouraged to hope that they intend to proceed with great Deliberation and Caution in their Debates concerning the weighty Matters which now lie before them, greater than which never [illegible] nor can lie before any Parliament; and such [illegible] the Measures taken upon them must determine the Happiness or [illegible] of this Kingdom, the Preservation of our Religion, Liberty and Country, or the Ruine of all.

Perhaps there never was any time in which it was more necessary to join Heads and Hearts for the Service of our Native Country, that so a safe and effectual Method may be agreed upon to bring the Nation through the great and many Difficulties it labours under, to attain the End which was proposed in the late Revolution, [illegible] the Warm which [illegible] engaged for the Defence of all that is dear unto us, against those who are the [illegible] of our Religion and Country.

'Tis plain the Evils and Dangers which press us [illegible] and numerous, and we acknowledge the Parliament [illegible]

our great State-Phyſician, and, under God, the Remedy of all our Ills) has already given a ſingular Inſtance of their Wiſdom and Care of the Publick, in appointing a time to conſider the State and Condition in which we are.

'Tis impoſſible to cure a Diſtemper till the State of the Patient be known. Matter of Fact muſt always go firſt. 'Tis in vain to imagine, or propoſe Expedients for our Relief, till we are fully informed and agreed what our Caſe is; and when that is well underſtood, the Nature of the Diſeaſe will naturally lead to thoſe Remedies that are moſt proper. This order of proceeding has always been practiſed in our Parliaments, who never miſtook when they would give themſelves the time throughly to examine the State of Things, before they came to a Determination. Precipitate Counſels have often done us great Miſchief; but when Matters of great Importance have been freely debated and clearly underſtood, before any Reſolution was taken, the End has never been otherwiſe than happy.

There is not a Body of *Men* in the World, who have ſo noble a Truſt repoſed in them, as that which is in the Houſe of Commons from the People of *England*. Our Neighbours the *Dutch*, tho they ſend Deputies to their States to manage their Publick Affairs, yet limit them with Inſtructions and Orders, beyond which they cannot go: and if any new Matter of Debate ariſe in the Aſſembly of their States, the Deputies can do nothing till firſt they go or ſend to their Towns for new Inſtructions. And the ſame I might ſay of Limitation of Truſts and Powers in other Governments, where Deputies are appointed and authorized to act in the Name of the People. But in *England* the caſe is quite otherwiſe. The People of this Nation do entirely put themſelves and their whole Concerns into the Hands of their Repreſentatives in Parliament. They have no Diſtruſt of them, and therefore put no manner of Shackles upon them; but taking it for granted they will employ their utmoſt Skill and Wiſdom for their Good, they frankly entruſt them

them with their Power, Purſes, and all other things wherein the Strength of the Nation conſiſts, that being clothed with ſo great and unbounded an Authority, they may be the better enabled to direct the Money, Men, Arms, Shipping, and all other Advantages of the Nation, to the Defence, Safety and Preſervation of the whole, the Care of which is their proper Province.

The Greatneſs and Frankneſs of this Truſt from the People to their Repreſentatives, is the higheſt Obligation imaginable upon all Members of Parliament to lay out themſelves with the utmoſt Induſtry and Application, for the Service of thoſe by whom they are thus entruſted. And this Obligation is at this time greater than uſual, ſince his Majeſty has been pleaſed ſo graciouſly in his Speech, at the opening of this Seſſion of Parliament, to demand the Advice and Aſſiſtance of the two Houſes in the Meaſures which he is to follow. If this Parliament ſhould ſeparate what the King ſo wiſely has joined together, and ſhould either give Aſſiſtance without Advice, or Aſſiſtance before Advice, our Affairs are ruined, and the Nation is undone. The Order which the King has preſcribed is the only one that can reaſonably be followed. Counſel muſt go before Supplies, and Conſideration before Counſel. Since the King puts himſelf ſo generouſly upon the Advice of his Great Council, in this Exigency of Affairs, 'twere an Injury to his Goodneſs and Sincerity, to doubt whether he will follow it, when it is given; and the more maturely he ſees things examined, ſtated and debated in the beginning of this Seſſion, the more reaſon he will have to follow Advices grounded upon ſuch Deliberations.

The thought of this inclines me to ſet down ſome few Reflections upon the State of the Nation at preſent, which is the thing now in Queſtion, and muſt be the Ground-work of whatever can reaſonably be done afterwards. If we can come but once to a right underſtanding whereabouts we are, and

what our Condition is, it will not then be difficult for us to know what we have to do: but if through want of Conſideration, or through Miſinformation, or for any other reaſon whatever, we neglect the Diſcovery of our true Dangers and Difficulties; or if we palliate or cover thoſe Wounds which can never be cured, unleſs they are firſt ſearch'd to the bottom, there is little hope of our being ſaved, and (which is the moſt killing thought of all) we muſt acknowledg our ſelves to be the Authors of our own Ruine.

The firſt thing which occurs to me, when I conſider the State of this Nation, is, That we are in a State of War; and here I purſue to conſider both againſt whom, and for what Ends it is that we make this War.

The Enemy with whom we have to deal is the French King, who is not only our Enemy, but, in ſome ſort, may be ſaid to be the Enemy of Mankind. If there be any thing dear and valuable to Mankind, he has given the Example of tearing and raviſhing it from them, without the leaſt pretence or colour of Juſtice; if there be any thing ſacred and binding, if Contracts and Engagements have any Force or obliging Virtue, 'tis he that has grounded his whole Politicks upon infringing and trampling upon thoſe ſacred Ties, both with his own Subjects and Strangers. It has been the Deſign of his whole Life to eſtabliſh in *Europe* what they call an Univerſal Monarchy, which may more properly be called, the enſlaving of all *Europe*. We know and can prove the Particulars of his private Treaties with both our late Kings, for the extirpating the Remainders of Liberty out of the World, by deſtroying the Governments of *England* and *Holland*, which were look'd upon by him as dangerous Examples of the Peoples pretending to Rights and Privileges, and putting Reſtrictions upon Regal Power. As to our Religion, we know his Rancour againſt that, by the Cruelty we have ſeen him exerciſe upon his own faithful and innocent Subjects, meerly becauſe they would not quit the Profeſſion

feſſion of it. His Hatred to all that bears the Name of Proteſtants, is inveterate and invincible. 'Tis he alone that maintains our late Abdicated, Fugitive King againſt us, and who, by reſtoring him again, would reduce all our Miſeries, and engage us in new ones too great to be thought on without the utmoſt Horror. And as his Malice againſt us is great, ſo his Power is every way anſwerable. His Armies are the moſt great and numerous that at any time were ever on foot in *Europe*. His Generals and Officers conſummated in the Trade of War. His Fleets, which were lately inconſiderable, are now, by the Treachery of our late Kings, grown ſo powerful, that he is able with them to look *England* and *Holland* in the face at the ſame time. There is no hope nor proſpect of any ſafe Peace to be made with him, unleſs we can deſtroy and ruine his Power at Sea, and by cutting off all manner of Commerce between him and our Neighbour States and Princes, put a ſtop to thoſe Supplies of Stores and Proviſions for his Armies, which enable him to carry on the War: For if we ſhould rely upon the Faith of any Treaty whereby he might endeavour to deceive and lull us aſleep, we ſhould then indeed deſerve neither Help nor Pity, ſince his Perfidiouſneſs and Perjury are ſo univerſally known, that no one now expects he ſhould obſerve any Promiſes or Engagements, any farther than he is ſwayed by his own Intereſt and Advantage. This Enemy, thus potent, thus malicious, thus falſe is he with whom we have our preſent War.

The Cauſes and Ends of our War are both juſt and neceſſary in the higheſt degree: Self-defence, the Maintenance of our ancient free Government, the aſſerting our Rights and Liberties; and above all, the Preſervation of the true Proteſtant Religion againſt Popery and Idolatry; theſe are the Ends for which we at firſt declared, and for which we are now proſecuting this War. In a word, our buſineſs is to make good the Revolution which we have compaſſed, and that for no other end but to maintain our ancient Rights and Liberties de-

livered

livered to us by our brave Anceſtors, which were ſo unjuſtly invaded in the laſt Reigns, and for the ſaving and recovery whereof we have both undertaken the War with *France*, and made the preſent Eſtabliſhment. So that it appears we are in a neceſſary War, with an Enemy who muſt be ſubdued, or we our ſelves entirely ruin'd, in all reſpects; and this Enemy ſo powerful and ſo politick, as that our utmoſt Strength, Wiſdom, Integrity and Reſolution are requiſite to manage the War againſt him with hopes of Succeſs. This, in ſhort, is our Caſe in reference to the preſent War.

It comes next to be conſidered, in what State and Condition we are for the carrying on this great War, which has already laſted almoſt four Years, and is like ſtill to laſt much longer, and at length to end unhappily, if effectual Meaſures be not taken by the Parliament to manage it in ſuch a way, and for ſuch Ends as are conſiſtent with our Ability, preſent Condition, and true Intereſt.

I muſt here make a melancholy Picture, which cannot but be very diſagreeable to all good Engliſh-men; but 'tis neceſſary the Truth ſhould be known, and our Condition truly underſtood by our Repreſentatives, in whoſe prudent Counſels, next under God, we place the hopes of our Safety and Deliverance from all our Dangers. If this be not rightly known, they will proceed upon falſe Suppoſitions, which muſt certainly prove fatal to us in this great Juncture. And therefore I ſhall mention ſome few of my farther Obſervations, in reference to the State of the Nation, without fearing to give Offence to any one by touching upon Truths which are but too obvious, and muſt be conſidered if things be intended to be put upon a right bottom, and the Nation ſaved.

I am afraid then that we are not only in a State of War, but alſo in a State of Decay and Conſuming, and that in many reſpects.

1. As to our Shipping. 'Tis incredible what Numbers of Ships we have loſt ſince the Beginning of this War. Can any Man ſay he knows the State of the Nation at this time, or pretend to go about to redreſs it, unleſs he be firſt rightly informed of this Particular? 'Tis a very eaſy matter for the Parliament to know it, if they pleaſe: For the Merchant-Ships (of which it is ſaid we have loſt two thouſand already) 'tis but ſending to every Port (which may be done thrice a Week by the Poſt) to know from them, exactly and diſtinctly, how many Ships have been loſt from each of them; and a true Account of this may eaſily be had in a very ſhort time. The Loſs of Men of War will be known from the Commiſſioners of the Admiralty, without Difficulty; and this certainly is a Point that muſt not be omitted, when the Parliament has the State of the Nation under Conſideration.

2. Another Complaint of Decay at this time, I doubt, may too juſtly be made in reference to our Sea-men: The Occaſion of this Decay is this: We have indeed Acts of Navigation, and one would think our own Intereſt ſhould incline us ſufficiently to imploy our own Men in Matters of Trade: yet there is ſo great Opportunity given to imploy Foreigners, by want of Convoys, and the breeding of Seamen being interrupted by the Loſs of ſo many of our Ships, and giving up the Bank-fiſhing and *New-found-Land*-fiſhing, in a manner, entirely to the French; that our Trade inſenſibly ſlips from us, our Merchants are diſappointed and undone, and our Seamen diſcouraged and diminiſhed, in whom notwithſtanding conſiſts the true Strength and Safegard of this Iſland. This muſt be inquired into, and the Fault charged by the Parliament where it is due, before they can ſay they have a right Underſtanding of the State of the Nation.

3. A third Inſtance of our decaying Condition is in our Trade. Not to mention again the prodigious Number of trading Ships taken by our Enemies, and the Diſcouragement

of

of our Seamen by imploying Foreigners, it is well known that all Nations now drive on a free Trade with *France*, and we alone are excepted from that Benefit; while on the other hand we bear three Parts of four of the Charge of this whole War. The Swedes, Danes, Portugues, Venetians, and others, take off the French Goods as openly as ever; and the two former ſupply them with Ships and Naval Stores. The Spaniards in the *Netherlands* maintain as open and regular a Trade with them as in the time of full Peace, without ſo much as a Diſguiſe, or the leaſt Pretence of a Diſguiſe, though we know they cannot ſubſiſt one Moment without Us; and therefore we may put a ſtop to ſuch Abuſes and deſtructive Practices whenſoever we pleaſe. Thoſe who know the Condition of *Denmark*, know likewiſe that we might eaſily have hindred the Supplies that have gone from thence to *France*; but though that were often adviſed and preſſed, yet nothing could be ever procured to be done. The *Dutch*, who pretend to be ſo cloſely united with us in Intereſt at this time, have private Factors every where, carrying on a Trade with *France*, in the Name of other Nations, while we alone loſe the Benefit of that Trade, which the reſt of the Allies divide amongſt them. This muſt be conſidered and examined as one principal Branch of the preſent unhappy State of the Nation.

4. Another Proof of the Decay we are under, is the Loſs and Diminution of our Treaſure, of which the King takes notice in his Speech; and this proceeds not only from hiring Foreigners for Convoys, and foreign Importers, who carry away the Money that ſhould be divided among our Engliſh Seamen and Traders, as was ſaid before, but principally from thoſe vaſt Sums which are ſent, *in ſpecie*, to pay our Land-Army, little of which ever returns into *England* again; and that which does is ſo clipp'd and leſſen'd, that it will not paſs, and from ſome of it, I have heard it confidently affirmed, there is no leſs taken than four or five Shillings in the Pound. 'Tis certain that

that every Nation has but ſuch a certain Quantity of Bullion, ſome more, ſome leſs, actually exiſting and being at one time within the Country: If that circulates and goes from hand to hand, whatever Loſſes private Men may ſuſtain, the Publick will never the more be impoveriſh'd. If the Stock be increaſed, and the Coin augmented by Trade, the Nation, in Proportion, muſt needs grow richer. But if that Stock be every Day viſibly and conſiderably diminiſhed, by taking from it, and ſending what is ſo taken to Places from whence it ſhall never return, without any other way to make equal amends for ſo conſiderable a Diminution of Money and Treaſure, it is plain that ſuch a Country muſt fall apace into Poverty, which draws all other Miſeries at its Heels; for Silver and Gold are the Nerves of War and all other Buſineſs. Thoſe who go into the ſeveral Counties of *England*, hear the Complaints that are made for the want of ready Money: and Landlords, who have ſo much Difficulty to get Rent from their Tenants, need no Arguments to convince them of the Truth of that Complaint made by the King in his Speech, as to this matter. This is another part of our Decay, to be conſidered and remedied.

5. Another Point of Decay which I ſhall touch, and but juſt touch, (though it be the moſt important of all) becauſe it is an invidious Point, is our Loſs of Blood. 'Tis true, Blood is like Water ſpilt on the Ground; when once 'tis ſhed, it cannot be gathered up again: but however, 'tis good to look backwards, and reflect upon theſe things in our own Mind, that at leaſt the ſerious Conſideration of what is paſt, may enable us to take better Meaſures for the future, and our Repreſentatives to give ſafe and faithful Advice to our King, which is the ultimate Scope and End to which their preſent Debates ought to be directed. Our Strength conſiſts mainly in three things, our Shipping, our Treaſure, and the Bodies of our young and vigorous Youth, which are the immediate Defence of the Nation both at Land and Sea. If theſe are in a decay-

ing Condition, we muſt decay, and at length expire with them. Therefore this muſt be conſidered under the head of Decay. I ſhall not ſay how many Lives have been ſpilt for the Reduction of *Ireland*, and how many of them might eaſily have been ſpared, if things had been rightly managed at firſt; nor how many of our braveſt Men periſhed in the Action at *Steenkirk*, for want of being ſuſtained, as they might and ought to have been: But ſurely theſe things are fit to be examined by the Parliament, when they are ſitting upon the State of the Nation.

Now to leave this Point of Decay, and to name but one more at preſent, in reference to the State of the Nation, I ſay we are abſolutely in a State of Unſettledneſs, in all reſpects, which muſts needs be very dreadful when we have ſuch a War upon our Hands.

1. We are intirely unſettled, as to the Government. The King's Title and the Legality of it, are as publickly diſputed, and with as little Fear of Puniſhment, as any Point of Natural Philoſophy in the Schools at *Oxford*, or any moot Caſe of Law by the Students in the Temple. Is not this an unſettled Condition with a witneſs? The Jacobites maintain every where that King *James* has a good Title ſtill; and that all which was done by this Nation in depoſing him, and ſetting the Crown upon King *William*'s Head, was void in it ſelf; and that no ſubſequent Conſent or Submiſſion of the Nation can legitimate an Authority ſet up at firſt upon ſo unjuſt a Foundation: And yet we do not ſee even any of theſe Men made Examples. Others who pretend to ſubmit to this Government, do yet openly renounce and impugn the Principles and Ground upon which it was ſet up by the Nation. They will ſuffer no mention to be made of the Original Contract broken by King *James*, nor of that new Contract made by King *William* with this Nation, in virtue whereof he is this Day King of *England*.

But

But inſtead of this, they write Books, and publiſh them, one while to prove that he is King by Conqueſt, another while to prove that he is King by an immediate Providence of God, and Direction from him; both which are equally deſtructive to the Nature of our Government, and to all the Ends propoſed to be compaſſed in the Revolution. And when theſe Books come out, we ſee one of them licenſed by one Secretary of State, and another by another Secrerary of State, which is as much Authority as can be given to the Writings of any private Men. Theſe things fill the Hearts of the People with Diſtruſt, Fears and Jealouſies, and do ſo diſtract them, that they know not where they are. If we are conquer'd, we have no more Laws nor Liberties at all, but as the Conqueror pleaſes. If God's immediate Hand have placed the King in the Throne, all Contracts and Stipulations vaniſh, and the Peoples part in eſtabliſhing this Government comes to nothing: nor can the Limitations they think they have put upon it, for their own Good and Safety, be of any Force. And then what Intereſt can they have to defend it? When Men ſee the Marks of publick Authority affixed to theſe vile pernicious Libels, they know not what to think, or which way to turn themſelves; it quells and daſhes them to that Degree, that they have no more Heart nor Alacrity to appear and act for the common Cauſe. Sure this is fit for the Inſpection of Parliament, when they are upon the State of the Nation.

There have been Bills and Declarations offered ſeveral times in Parliament for abjuring King *James*'s Authority, and declaring King *William* and Queen *Mary* Lawful and Rightful King and Queen of this Realm; but nothing of this kind has ever yet been brought to Perfection. How can we think our ſelves in any ſort of Settlement, ſo long as this remains undone? It has always been the Cuſtom, both in *England* and other Countries, when Princes, Families, and Forms of Government have been laid aſide for their Tyranny, Mal-Adminiſtration,

or even but any Politick or Prudent Reaſon, to cauſe the People to renounce and abjure them, at the ſame time that they took their Oaths of Fidelity to the New Government, eſtabliſhed in the room of that which was laid aſide; and without this the New Government never thought it ſelf ſecure, nor could think ſo: for while the Peoples Allegiance is not fixed upon one and the ſame Government, the Kingdom muſt be divided, and we know a Kingdom divided within it ſelf cannot ſtand. Nay even where there was no actual Change made, but only in Proſpect and in Futurity, yet there the People were obliged to declare themſelves abſolved from any Obligation of Obedience to thoſe who were laid aſide. Of this we have ſeveral Examples in the ſeveral Changes which were made in the Succeſſion, by Act of Parliament, in *Henry* the VIII*th*'s Reign; and the like has been always done in all other Places. When the *Tarquins* were driven from *Rome*, were not all the People obliged ſolemnly to renounce them and their Government for ever? And to give no more Inſtances, was not the ſame thing done in *Holland* in the laſt Age, when the Dutch reſcued themſelves from Slavery, by throwing off the Spaniſh Government, and ſetting up a Free Commonwealth? Will our Condition be leſs miſerable than theirs was, in caſe our Abdicated King *James* ſhould return upon us, and be replac'd in his Throne by a French Army? Are the French more merciful now than the Spaniards were at that time? or rather would they not act a thouſand times more Cruelties here, if they ſhould prevail upon us, than the former did in *Holland*, having a threefold Pretext for their Violences againſt us, ſince they would, at the ſame time, look upon us as Hereticks, as Rebels, and as a conquer'd Country? Ought not we to uſe the ſame prudent Means to ſecure our Government, and to diſcern thoſe who are for it in Principle, from thoſe who comply with it only from Fear and Intereſt; which have been practiſed by other wiſe Nations, and ſo often by our own, upon

on the like occaſion? But inſtead of this, whenever any thing of that kind has been brought on, it has always been defeated by thoſe whoſe Maſterpiece it has been, ever ſince the late Revolution, to keep all things in Suſpence, as they hope ſtill to do, till they can find an Opportunity to bring back their old Maſter, to whom they will value themſelves upon their Dexterity, in keeping off a thing that would have been ſo much to his Prejudice. And their treacherous Inſinuations did ſo far prevail, where one would leaſt have expected it, that thoſe who of all others ſhould have deſired ſuch an Abjuration, and ſhould never have thought themſelves ſafe one Minute, till it were enacted, were brought to believe it to be againſt their Intereſt, and to oppoſe and counter-work it in Parliament as much as they could; inſomuch that a Gentleman of the Houſe of Commons being asked, whether he would be for the Abjuration? anſwered very ingeniouſly, No, he did not deſire to diſpleaſe two Kings at once. 'Tis aſtoniſhing to think of, that the Officers in the chiefeſt Truſts of the Nation are not obliged to own this a lawful Government, as it is declared and aſſerted to be in the Bill of Rights. And it is the more aſtoniſhing, no ſuch Proviſion ſhould have yet been made by the Parliament, for the Security of the Government, becauſe ſeveral of thoſe who have now the greateſt Employments and higheſt Truſts in the Kingdom, did, both before and after the time of preſenting the Crown to their Majeſties, openly declare and maintain it as their Opinion, both in Parliament, and upon many other Occaſions, that their Majeſties were not, nor could not be made Lawful King and Queen, but were only ſo *de facto*, and as ſuch they ſubmitted to them, and no otherwiſe; which I believe is the firſt and only Inſtance that can ever be produced, either out of Ancient or Modern Hiſtory, of Miniſters and Officers of State, who openly and publickly maintained, in ſet Speeches, in the Aſſembly of the States or Repreſentatives of a Country, that the Prince whom they

actually

actually ſerved had no juſt or legal Title. This is ſuch a ſort of Unſettledneſs, as never was any where but in *England*, nor never there but at this time only.

But to conſider the State of the Nation farther in this reſpect; We are not only in an unſettled Condition in reference to this King's Title, but likewiſe in reference to the ancient Government it ſelf, and the time of holding Parliaments. The ancient Law of *England* is indeed clear and plain enough in this matter: but it has been ſo obſcur'd by the illegal Practices and Judgments in the late Reigns, that we cannot be thought to have any manner of Settlement, till the great Point be clearly ſettled and determin'd. Indeed there is mention in the Bill of Rights of frequent Parliaments; but this is ſo general an Expreſſion, and ſo liable to doubtful Interpretations, that we can receive no aſſured benefit from it. Our Government cannot in any ſort be thought to be ſettled, till the manner and time of calling Parliaments, and their ſitting, when called, be fully determin'd, explain'd and agreed on. Without this we are but *Arena ſine calce*, our Government is but the Embryo and Rudiments of a Government, a Government only *in Potentiâ*; and there can be no real Settlement till we know and appoint, with certainty, the times of calling, holding and ſitting of Parliaments. The different Methods taken by our late Kings to deſtroy our Conſtitution, and enſlave us, either on the one ſide, by depriving us of Parliaments entirely, and in the abſence of them, governing us by Will and Pleaſure (which was the caſe in King *Charles* the Firſt's time); or on the other ſide, (which was equally deſtructive to the Nation, and its Liberties) by keeping one and the ſame Parliament ſo long on foot till they had time to corrupt the Majority of them by Offices, Gifts and Penſions (which was what was practiſed in the time of King *Charles* 2.): I ſay, theſe different Methods of our Kings to diſappoint us of all the Good we hoped from Parliaments, have made it abſolutely neceſſary

neceſſary to come to a clear Settlement in this matter, without which 'tis a Jeſt to talk of a Settlement. And this is certainly the true time to get it done: Now that the Crown has need of ſuch great Sums of Money, and that the King asks ſo frankly the Advice of the Parliament for taking ſuch Meaſures as may be for the good of the Nation; and it is not ſufficient to anſwer, that we have now ſo good a King, that we need not fear but we ſhall have Parliaments as often, and in ſuch a manner as is moſt for the good of the Kingdom. For the beſt Kings are mortal, and it is in the Reigns of good Kings that good Laws muſt be made, or not at all. And there is no doubt but if the Parliament lay this matter before the King, with the Reaſons that oblige them to deſire it, his Majeſty will be prevail'd with by them to conſent to a thing, which is ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary to the maintaining that Conſtitution, and thoſe Liberties of the Nation, which he came over to aſſert and vindicate.

To ſhew how unſettled we are as to this great Point of Parliaments, I cannot but mention the Caſe of thoſe Lords, who were under an Impeachment of the Houſe of Commons in the end of King *Charles* the Second's Reign, and had been committed to the Tower by the Lords in order to their Trial, where after they had been four or five Years without a Trial, for want of a Parliament to try them, they were bailed out of Priſon by *Jefferies*, and the other Judges of the King's-Bench in *Michaelmas* Term, 1683. This was contrary to all Law and Privilege of Parliament, and therefore they were ſeveral Years before they durſt venture upon it: but at laſt the Judges of the King's-Bench undertook it; and when they came to do it, the reaſon they gave was, That it being intirely in the King's Power when to call a Parliament, which he might keep off as long as he pleaſed by his Prerogative Royal, notwithſtanding the Laws for Annual Parliaments, and it being uncertain whether he would call one or no, ſince he had

not

not done it for ſeveral Years before that time, it could not be the Intention of the Law to keep Men without Trials in Priſon all their Lives, which, for ought they knew, might be all ended before the King would think fit to call a Parliament. And therefore they thought they had Power to relieve Men in ſuch Caſes; and accordingly they let out thoſe Priſoners under Bail, who have ever ſince continued to be at liberty, both before and ſince the Revolution. Theſe Diſcourſes of the Judges of the King's-Bench were taken in Notes by the Lawyers, and will doubtleſs appear in any of their Reports that ſhall be printed, as the unanimous Opinion of all the Judges of that Court; and the Order of Court, which was made for admitting thoſe Lords to Bail, in purſuance to that Principle and Maxim of the Judges, That it is in the King's Power to keep off Parliaments as long as he pleaſes, is a ſtanding Teſtimony upon Record, that our Conſtitution, as well as our Laws, is entirely in the King's Breaſt, and that he has the Prerogative of governing us without Parliaments, always, or as long as he pleaſes. Whilſt ſuch Points as theſe remain unſettled, and ſuch Precedents uncondemn'd, 'tis plain our Government is altogether without Settlement; and that whilſt the holding of Parliaments is precarious, and abſolutely depending upon the Pleaſure of the Crown, there can be no Safety for the Life, Eſtate or Liberty of the Engliſh Subject.

2. Thus it appears, as one part of the State of the Nation, that we are in a Condition of Unſettledneſs in reference to the Government: But we are farther in a very ſad unſettled Eſtate in many other reſpects. We are unſettled as to the quiet Enjoyment of our own Houſes. There are Precedents lately made, both in publick and private Houſes, of quartering Souldiers, contrary to the ancient Law, the Petition of Right, and the expreſs Letter of the Act of *Car.* 2. And this is the leſs excuſable, becauſe there was a Bill paſt the Houſe of Commons laſt Seſſion, to enable them to quarter their Souldiers,

diers, and to regulate the manner of it; but there were ſome things in the Preamble of that Bill which diſpleaſed ſome People; and therefore it was thought better to quarter them without Law, and againſt Law, than to ſuffer a Bill to paſs which had ſome Clauſes in it that ſeemed to put too much Reſtraint upon Prerogative. If ſuch Oppreſſions and Invaſions of the Liberty of the Subject are let alone without Remedy, 'tis to little purpoſe for Parliaments to meet to conſider the State of the Nation, or to pretend to make any Proviſion for our Safety. And the truth is, this cannot be remedied but by a new Bill of Rights, declaring again the Right of the Engliſh Subject in this behalf.

3. The ſame may be ſaid in reference to our Property. We are likewiſe in a very unſettled Condition in that reſpect. For this, I ſhall only at preſent give one Inſtance, which is that of ſeizing the Subjects Property for Tranſport-Ships, without ſettling any Fund to pay them, as has been made out before the Commiſſioners of Accounts, by which many have been oppreſſed and ruined.

4. But further; We are in an unſettled Condition as to our very Lives. There is no Man ignorant of the barbarous Proceedings in Trials for Treaſon in the late Arbitrary Reigns. Men were condemn'd and executed upon the Evidence of ſingle Witneſſes, upon Papers not proved to be their Handwriting, by Innuendo's and far-fetch'd Conſtructions; all the benefit allowed them by the Laws was denied them, illegal Juries pack'd upon them; and the Laws which had been provided by the Wiſdom of our Anceſtors for the Defence and Security of the Subject's Life, were, by perverſe and falſe Conſtructions put upon them by corrupt and mercenary Lawyers and Judges, made uſe of to murder and deſtroy the beſt Men we had. The remedying of this great Evil was declared to be one of the main Ends of the Revolution. And yet things are ſtill at this day in the ſame condition, in that

reſpect, as they were before the King came into *England*. The Lives of the Subjects are in as much danger as ever, ſince there is no manner of Security yet provided againſt the open Violations of Law in the laſt Reigns. Nay, the very ſame corrupt Opinions are now delivered for Law, which King *Charles* and King *James*'s Judges were infamous for. It is but few days ago that ſome of the Judges declared, in the Lord's Houſe, That one Witneſs to a principal Treaſon, and another to a Circumſtance, was ſufficient to convict a Man that is indicted for Treaſon; which was the worſt of all the Opinions delivered upon the Bench by the late Chief Juſtice *Jefferies*. If theſe Doctrines are ſuffered to paſs for Law amongſt us, our Revolution indeed is to good purpoſe; and yet there is not hitherto any Proviſion made to the contrary. Can our Parliament, when 'tis upon the State of the Nation, ſuffer us to continue unſettled in ſuch Points as theſe are?

5. Another Particular in which we are at this day as much unſettled as in any of the reſt, is, the way and manner of defending the Kingdom againſt our Enemies. Whenever we are frighted with the Noiſe of a French Deſcent, our Militia is raiſed, to the vaſt Expence and Burden of the Kingdom; but 'tis ſo unexperienced, undiſciplined, and compoſed of ſuch Perſons, that it can never be any real Defence to the Kingdom in time of Danger. There is indeed no Militia ſettled, but what is burdenſome and uſeleſs. Several Bills, 'tis true, have been offered to this and the laſt Parliament for putting the Militia upon an uſeful foot to the Kingdom, but they never came to any thing, being always oppoſed and defeated by thoſe who thought it more for their purpoſe to have a regular ſtanding Force kept up. Our Anceſtors were a warlike People, and it was the Policy of thoſe free and honeſt Times, to keep all the People of *England* to the Exerciſe of their Arms; and for this purpoſe there were divers Laws made, which were duly and conſtantly executed, by which means all the Men in the Nation,

Nation, who were able to bear Arms, were perfectly well-diſciplin'd, and enabled to defend their Country in their own proper Perſons, which is the only true Defence of a free Country. With this ſort of Men, drawn together as occaſion required, our Anceſtors conquer'd *France* ſeveral times over: and with this ſort of Men it is at this day that the *Swiſſers* defend their Liberty; no Power in *Europe* daring to invade, or attack a free Nation arm'd and diſciplin'd in its own Defence, and which fighting for it ſelf, can neither be corrupted like an Army of Mercenaries, nor enter into Deſigns againſt its own Liberty and Happineſs. When our old Laws are reviv'd, (with ſuch Alterations as the Change of Arms, and the preſent way of fighting requires) and our old Diſcipline reſtor'd, our Militia will then be ſignificant indeed for our Defence, and not till then. There is one Clauſe in the Bill of Rights which ſeems to look towards this, which is, That every Engliſh Subject has a Right of keeping Arms for his Defence. But this is not enough, the old Laws muſt be revived, and our Militia, which is at preſent but a Burden and Grievance to us, muſt be put into a real Condition of being uſeful, and a true Defence to the Nation. This is another Point in which, I ſay, we are wholly unſettled, and that is, The way and manner of Defence of the Kingdom; and this is another part of the preſent dangerous and unſettled State of the Nation.

6. Another thing in which we are in a lamentable unſettled Condition, is, the Courſe of our Trade, which was touch'd before, under the Head of Decay. Our Merchants are ruin'd by the loſs of their Ships and Goods, and their beſt Opportunities of Trade are loſt for want of Convoys. Our Seas and Coaſts are not defended, and our Natives are forced to have recourſe to Foreigners to Guard and Convoy their Ships, who carry away the Money that ſhould be earn'd and kept in *England* by our Engliſh Seamen. All Nations are permitted to trade with *France*, and ſupply them with whatever is neceſſary for

the carrying on this War, whilſt we alone loſe the benefit of ſuch a Trade; ſo that in effect, we make War againſt *France* alone, and all the World makes War againſt us. And certain it is, that while the Fountain is ſo plentifully ſupplied with Water from all Parts, we ſhall never be able to ſtop the Streams: or, which is all one, while the Fire is ſo conſtantly fed with Fewel from all hands, we ſhall never be able to put it out. The greateſt and moſt certain of all our Maxims, at this time, is this, That unleſs we can put a ſtop to the Commerce of *France* with our Neighbours, and to the Supply of Ships, Stores, and other things which they receive from them, we can never hope to bring this War to a happy end. The Price of Corn is exceſſively high at preſent in *France*, which cauſes a ſort of Famine in many Provinces of that Kingdom: This is a great Advantage to us; but if we ſuffer the *Danes*, *Swedes* and *Hamburghers* quietly to ſupply them with as much Corn as they want, What benefit can we have from this Advantage? The *Dutch* and *Spaniſh* Bills of Exchange do now run through *France*, which, beſides the Profit the French have by it, is a certain way of revealing to them all the Secrets of the Confederacy, ſince they have the Power of opening all Letters in the Paſſage. This has been ſufficiently repreſented, and other ways propoſed for the Conveyance of Letters and Bills of Exchange; but ſuch Offers have been neglected, and the ſame way of ſending Letters through *France*, ſuffered to continue. And ſince I have mentioned this, I muſt alſo take notice of the Trade driven with *France* by the Jews in *Germany*, who ſend every Year ten or twelve thouſand Horſes to ſupply their Army; and the Princes who are our Allies, connive at this Trade for the ſake of a little Profit: And then when we go into the Field againſt the French in *Flanders*, in the Summer-time, theſe very Horſes are imployed againſt us. Thus we ſuffer our Allies, and all the World, to carry on a lucrative Trade with *France*, while we our ſelves are forced to bear almoſt

moſt the whole Burden of the War, and are thus ſhamefully made the Cullies of the Confederacy.

The Truth of it is, our preſent Condition is very miſerable and dreadful. If we look upon the War, and the Management of Affairs at home, in reference to it, we cannot but ſee that there is a Vein of Treachery runs through it, from one End to the other: How elſe is it poſſible every thing ſhould miſgive and miſcarry, as we ſee it has done? How could all our Preparations this Year for a Deſcent upon *France*, have been fore-ſlow'd and retarded as they were, and our Men imbark'd, only to coſt half a Million, and make us ridiculous to the whole World, unleſs the Hand of *Joab* had been in it? Nay, it does not appear there was ſo much as any tolerable Scheme, Plan or Deſign laid for this Deſcent, which was ſo much valued to the Parliament laſt Winter, and fill'd the World ſo much with Expectation all the Beginning of this Summer: The time was only ſpun out, and all things ordered ſo, that no good Effect ſhould follow, which could proceed from nothing but Treachery in ſome of thoſe who had the ordering of it. Who can believe that our Victory at Sea this Year ſhould not have been farther purſued, if all People imployed had been well intentionated? Why was there never any examining of Miſcarriages, in not purſuing this Victory at Sea, and in not haſtning the Preparations for the Deſcent? In theſe Caſes we have *Teſtimonium rei, res ipſa loquitur*. There can be but one Reaſon for ſuch affected and ſtudied Neglects as theſe are. How come we to labour under ſuch want of Intelligence, even in things in which it may ſo eaſily be had, and that for ſo little Money? The want of this kept out our great Ships laſt Year longer than was needful, when the French laid up theirs. It was that or worſe that loſt the Opportunity of fighting the French laſt Year, when they came to *Ireland* with only a Squadron. It was want of Intelligence that made our Fleet ſo backward to go out this Spring.

Spring. If we had had good Intelligence, we had not ſtaid, after we were ready, for the Dutch Fleet to aſſiſt us, when we were really more in number than the French, though Reports were induſtriouſly ſpread that they had 90 or 100 Sail of Line Ships, and that *D'Eſtree* had joined them, which was confirmed at Court, though a Dane affirmed, he had left *D'Eſtree* in the *Streights*. We had no notice, for ſeveral Weeks together, of the French Ships got into the Road of the *Haure de Grace*, and their Condition there, (though eaſy to be had twice a Week by Fiſhermen) till Merchants brought the News to our Secretary's Office.

When Orders are to be given out for any Deſign, there are ſo many Delays, upon one Pretence or other, that the time of Execution is always over before the Orders are received. And beſides, they are ſo defective, and in their Nature ſo impracticable, (as we have lately ſeen in the Buſineſs of the Deſcent) that it were better none at all ſhould be given.

Are there any Deſigns on foot to join with our Enemies, and riſe in favour of them, as there was this Summer, when the French were coming? Yet no Body is found out or proſecuted that was concerned in it. Every Body knew that Horſes and Arms were bought, and ſome were taken. Every County ſaw that their diſcontented Men flocked up to *London*. No Body thought the French would either provide to come hither, or ſeek to fight us at Sea, but upon ſome Ground of Treachery; and yet there could be no Body diſcovered that had any Correſpondence with them. Theſe things are Indications ſufficiently plain to any wiſe Man, where the bottom of all this Miſchief lies: But none are ſo blind as thoſe who will not ſee.

All theſe things put together, make a conſiderable part of the melancholy and miſerable State of the Nation at this preſent time. If it be asked, what ſhall be done to remove all theſe

theſe Evils? I ſay the firſt Step towards a Cure, is well to underſtand our Diſeaſe; and if the Parliament can be throughly ſenſible of theſe things, and make the King likewiſe ſenſible of them, the very Nature of the Diſeaſe will of it ſelf lead to the proper Remedies. Therefore I am humbly of Opinion, that the Parliament ſhould begin by a moſt humble, dutiful and reſpectful Addreſs to his Majeſty, repreſenting to him the true State of the Nation in its preſent Circumſtances, returning Thanks in the moſt humble and affectionate manner imaginable, for that gracious Expreſſion of demanding the Advice of the Parliament, and aſſuring him, that neither their Advice nor Aſſiſtance ſhall be wanting for maintaining and defending his Perſon and Government againſt the Attempts of all his Enemies, as on their ſide, after what he has ſaid, at the opening of this Seſſion of Parliament, they cannot doubt but his Majeſty will heartily concur with them in what they ſhall adviſe for his Honour, Safety and Greatneſs, and the Good of the Nation. After this the Parliament will proceed to offer to his Majeſty ſuch Bills as may be moſt proper to remedy the Grievances of which we complain; and at the ſame time that they give Money for carrying on the War, will adviſe ſuch Meaſures as may beſt enable his Majeſty to bring down *the exceſſive Power of* France, and at the ſame time to ſecure the Happineſs and Liberties of the Engliſh Nation. If Debates are free and clear within Doors, ſo as to incourage thoſe without, to hope that there is really a Probability of ſomething to be done for the Good of the Nation, there will be farther Propoſals made of ſuch things as are thought moſt proper and neceſſary to be done at this time.

FINIS.